



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

DOCUMENTS

I. *Letters of Jefferson to Marbois, 1781, 1783*

THESE two letters were found in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris (Fonds Français, 12768, folios 245, 247) by Professor James Westfall Thompson of the University of Chicago. The first has an interesting bearing on the genesis of the *Notes on Virginia*. Mr. Paul Ford's statement (*Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, III. 68) may be quoted:

In 1781 the French ministry directed their American agent to gather certain information concerning the several States then forming the American union, for the use of the home government. The secretary of the French legation, Marbois, in pursuance of this instruction, drew up a series of questions, which were sent to leading men in the different States, who were presumed to be best competent to supply the needed answers. These questions produced from several of the States replies more or less adequate, a number of which have been since printed. On the recommendation of Joseph Jones, then a member of the continental congress, a set of queries was sent to Jefferson, then still governor of Virginia.

Jefferson, in his autobiography (*Writings*, I. 85) says that it had been his practice, when he came upon useful pieces of information respecting Virginia, to note them on loose papers. "I thought this a good occasion to embody their substance, which I did in the order of Mr. Marbois' queries . . . and to arrange them for my own use." Mr. Ford prints (III. 68) a letter dated March 4, 1781, in which Jefferson promises Marbois his aid. The original of this letter, Mr. Thompson tells us, is in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Fonds Français, 12768, folio 243); Mr. Ford no doubt printed from the copy preserved among the Jefferson manuscripts. But the two letters which follow are not in that collection, and have not been printed. It will be remembered that François de Barbé-Marbois, afterward the negotiator of the Louisiana treaty of 1803, was from 1779 to 1785 secretary of the French legation to the United States, under Luzerne as minister. The second letter relates to Jefferson's daughter Martha. Her mother had died in 1782. In July, 1784, Jefferson and the daughter started for Paris, where he put her to school in a convent.

RICHMOND Dec. 20. 1781

Sir

I now do myself the honour of inclosing you answers to the queries which Mr. Jones put into my hands. I fear your patience has been exhausted in attending them, but I beg you to be assured there has been no avoidable delay on my part. I retired from the public service in June only, and after that the general confusion of our state put it out of my power to procure the informations necessary till lately. Even now you will find them very imperfect and not worth offering but as proof of my respect for your wishes. I have taken the liberty of referring to you my friend Mr. Charles Thompson¹ for a perusal of them when convenient to you. Particular reasons, subsisting between him and myself, induced me to give you this trouble.

If his Excellency the Chevalier de la Luzerne will accept the respects of a stranger I beg you to present mine to him, and to consider me as being with the greatest regard and esteem Sir

Your most obedient
and most humble servt

TH: JEFFERSON

[Indorsement:] Monsr de Marbois
Secretary to the embassy
of his most Christian Majesty
Philadelphia.

ANNAPOLIS Dec. 5. 1783

Sir

Your very obliging letter of Nov. 22 was put into my hands just in the moment of my departure from Philadelphia, which put it out of my power to acknowledge in the same instant my obligation for the charge you were so kind as to undertake of presenting a French tutor to my daughter and for the very friendly disposition and attentions you flatter me with. The same cause prevented me from procuring her the books you were so kind as to recommend, but this shall be supplied by orders from hence. I had left with her a *Gil Blas*² and *Don Quichotte* which are among the best books of their class as far as I am acquainted with them. The plan of reading which I have formed for her is considerably different from [that] which I think would be most proper for her sex in any other country than America. I am obliged in it to extend my views beyond herself, and consider her as possibly at the head of a little family of her own. The chance that in marriage she will draw a blockhead I calculate at about fourteen to one, and of course that the education of her family will probably rest on her own ideas and direction without assistance. With the poets and prose writers I shall there-

¹ The original edition of the *Notes* contained an extensive appendix by Secretary Charles Thomson; in subsequent editions his material was distributed through the book.

² Martha was eleven years old.

fore combine a certain extent of reading in the graver sciences. However I scarcely expect to enter her on this till she returns to me. Her time in Philadelphia will be chiefly occupied in acquiring a little taste and execution in such of the fine arts as she could not prosecute to equal advantage in a more retired situation.¹

We have yet but four states in Congress. I think when we are assembled we shall propose to dispatch the most urging and important business, and, putting by what may wait, separate and return to our respective states, leaving only a Committee of the States.² The constant session of Congress cannot be necessary in time of peace, and their separation will destroy the strange idea of their being a permanent body, which has unaccountably taken possession of the heads of their constituents, and occasions jealousies injurious to the public good.

I have the honour of being with very perfect esteem and respect Sir
Your most obedient and most humble Servt

TH: JEFFERSON

2. *Journal of John Mair, 1791*

JOHN MAIR, Esquire, of Iron Acton, father of Mary Charlotte, wife of Nassau W. Senior, was born in 1744. His friends bought him a commission as cornet of dragoons and he immediately sailed for India in 1761. After much active service he retired from the army and sailed from India in the same ship with Lord Clive in 1767. Elaborate journals of his stay in India and subsequent travels are in the possession of his granddaughter. He visited Paris on his way home, and lived there with John Wilkes and his daughter. In 1770 he again visited Paris to be present at the marriage of Louis XVI. to Marie Antoinette, whom he ardently admired. He was an inveterate traveller, visiting all parts of England and the Continent, the United States, Canada, and the West Indies, where he was so much charmed with Dominica that he bought an estate and lived there several years. During the short time he lived in England he spent the winters at Bath. In his old age he bought the little estate of Iron Acton in Gloucestershire and took his son and two daughters to live with him. John Raven Senior was then parson of the parish, hence the marriage of Nassau Senior and Mary Mair. Mr. Mair died in London at his son-in-law's house, 13 Hyde Park, in 1830, of fatigue brought on by a hasty visit to Paris to see the results of the Revolution of 1830. His journals, in the possession of Mrs. M. Simpson, of Milmead House, Guildford, Sur-

¹ Jefferson's letter of November 28, 1783, to his daughter (Miss Randolph's *Domestic Life of Thomas Jefferson*, 69; Ford, III. 344) shows her programme to consist mostly of music, dancing, and drawing, but from three to four o'clock each day she was to read French.

² Congress did not adjourn till June 3, 1784.